(c) if so, whether any laboratory test was conducted on the samples;

(d) if so, what are the findings thereof; and

(e) what will be the fate of the shipment in case it is found to be infested?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The release of a consignment of 55,000 tonnes of U.S. wheat brought by MV 'Vitessa' at JNPT Bombay on 14-1-93 was withheld by Port Health Authorities because of their suspicion that it contained foreign matter in excess of the limit permitted under PFA Rules. On detailed sampling and analysis at Central Food Laboratory, Pune, the consignment was, however, found fully fit for human consumption and conforming to PFA standards. After having been fully satisfied with the quality, the consignment was subsequently released by the Port Authorities.

The occurence of insect infestation in foodgrain shipments under tropical and sub-tropical climatic conditions like that of our country is a common and natural phenomenon. Such consignments are fumigated with the approved fumigants at the prescribed dosage in the shipholds/transit sheds. The consignment brought by MV 'Vitessa' was also fumigated on observance of some insects and after being found fit for human consumption, the consignment has been cleared for issue for PDS.

Procurement of Wheat and Rice

2179. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) The State-wise procurement targets fixed for wheat and rice this year and the extent to which the same have been and are expected to be achieved; and

(b) the details of the comparative figures for the past three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b) The procurement of wheat and paddy for the Central pool under the price support scheme being totally voluntary and the procurment of levy-rice from millers/traders being dependent on the quantum of paddy purchased by them, no targets as such can be fixed for procurement of wheat and rice.

A Statement showing State-wise quantities of wheat and rice procured during the last three marketing seasons as also in the current marketing season is given in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix CLXVI, Annexure No. 43].

Production of Sugar

2180. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar production in the 1992-93 season has substantially dropped;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government are taking to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) The production of sugar during the current 1992-93 season (Oct.-Sept.), as on 15-2-1993, was 62.66 lakh tonnes (provisional), as against 66.73 lakh tonnes upto the corresponding date in the previous sugar season 1991-92, thereby showing a decline of 4.07 lakh tonnes.

(b) The area under sugarcane this season is reported to be less than that of last season. This could be due to a variety of factors, such as weather

and climatic conditions, diversion of land to other crops, delay in payment of cane price, etc.

(c) The Government have initiated the following measures to improve the level of sugar production in the country:

(i) Additional production of sugar factories during the period 1st of January, 1993 to 30th April, 1993, over the corresponding period during 1991-92 season, would be entitled to 80 per cent freesale quota, as against the normal 60 per cent.

(ii) The sugar factories which would undertake sugar production during the late crushing period i.e. 1st of May to 31st July, 1993 would be entitled to higher freesale quota of 72 per cent, as against normal 60 per cent.

(iii) The Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) of sugarcane for the current 1992-93 season has been increased to Rs. 31/- per quintal linked to a basic recovery of 8.5 percent with proportionate premium for every 0.1 per cent increase in recovey above that level. An advance announcement of Statutory Minimum Price of Rs. 32.50 per quintal linked to a basic recovery of 8.5 per cent has been made for 1993-94 season.

(iv) The ratio of levy to freesale sugar has been revised to 40:60 for 1992-93 season, as against 45:55 earlier.

(v) Zone-wise ex-factory levy sugar price has been notified with reference to the increased SMP of Rs. 31/- per quintal for 1992-93 season.

(vi) The Incentive Scheme for new sugar factories and expansion projects has been suitably revised.

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Statutory minimum price of sugarcane

2181. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recenty raised the statutory minimum price of sugarcane for the current crushing season;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the factors underlying the decision to raise statutory minimum price; and

(c) by which date the new sugarcane price will be enforced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Statutory Minimum Price of Sugarcane for the current 1992-93 season has been raised to Rs. 31/- per quintal linked to a basic recovery of 8.5 per cent, as against Rs. 27/- per quintal announced in December, 1991. The increase in Statutory Minimum Price of Sugarcane has been made keeping in view the enhanced cost of production, return to the grower from alternative crops, the general trend of prices of agricultural commodities, availability and sale price of sugar, etc.

(c) The new Statutory Minimum Price for 1992-93 season would be effective from 1-10-1992.

Equipment at instrumentation centre Delhi University

2182. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that equipment worth several lakhs of rupees is lying unutilised in Delhi University's Instrumentation Centre;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) what measures Government propose to take to make the instruments functional?